

Supplementary Estimates

assembled in the House, rather than in committee, to point out that some of those who sit on the benches opposite have been misled, perhaps into thinking that this particular item in the estimates represents the totality of government programs in this field. It may very well occur that there are government programs which are ongoing or capable of implementation in other ways in conjunction with the required expenditure of money. This is certainly the case in connection with the matter before us today.

• (4:10 p.m.)

As an example of that principle, I want to refer to the fact that the program which the hon. member for Peace River discussed, the "lift" program, has in fact a major portion of its implementation in the general law of the land. Under regulations made in connection with the Wheat Board Act, the most important part of the program can in fact be put into place. The whole of the quota system, as an example, is in fact authorized to be put in place under the Wheat Board Act itself. This is what the government intends.

When the program was announced, the intention of the government along these lines was made clear. The expenditure of the \$100 million, which has been referred to on previous occasions by the hon. member for Peace River as a shabby amount and I think by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) as a small crumb, is important and, of course, has to be included in the estimates themselves.

The authority to pay the money in conjunction with the program, as I indicated, is found in part elsewhere in the law. It is important for members to appreciate that, in this fashion, the expenditure of money which is of vital importance to the program, can accompany a program for which authorization is found elsewhere. This certainly puts to nought, if I may simply say that, the arguments which have been heard from time to time about what should or should not be included in the substance of an item in the estimates.

In a case like this, as an example, the vote of the money here is a very important part of the program, but it is certainly only auxiliary or ancillary to other parts of the program which can be put into place under the law generally.

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward- Hastings): Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, we are now permitted to make general remarks on

[Mr. Lang.]

programs of the government. I wish to take this opportunity to speak briefly about matters that were under very heavy discussion last week, specifically inflation and unemployment, and what the government's programs have done to make these situations considerably worse.

A week ago Sunday night, all of those who were watching the CBC television news were very surprised to hear the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) disclose the latest chapter in the government's four year effort to curb inflation. At that time the final plans of his government, which claims to be a modern government using computers and a lot of bright young men who fill the Prime Minister's office called modern thinkers, was disclosed.

We were amazed to hear the Minister of Finance, in his disclosure of the government's present plans to curb inflation, disclose a plan that has been in operation in various countries throughout the world for literally hundreds of years. This government of computers and bright young men is now going to fight inflation by that age old process of slowing down the economy by restricting credit. That has always been followed in every country where it has been tried by workers being laid off. When they get hungry, these workers are willing to work for less. This brings costs down, prices fall and the country concerned considers that it has licked inflation.

We heard the Minister of Finance say very clearly on television the other night that this government considers it may be necessary to have higher unemployment in 1970 than it had in 1969, if, in his own words, we are really going to lick inflation. So there you have the policy of this government. After four years of failure in its efforts to curb inflation it is finally going back to policies that have been in operation for hundreds of years. It is finally admitting that the best the so-called just society can produce is that great reactionary and harsh policy of growing unemployment, growing misery and growing hardship, which has been in use for so long.

Let us examine for a moment this government's programs for fighting inflation in the past four years. During the first three of those four years it resorted, in various budgets, to increasing taxes, which did not work. The cost of living kept increasing year by year at a steadily accelerating rate. Finally, after three years of increased taxes the government decided this method was not effective.